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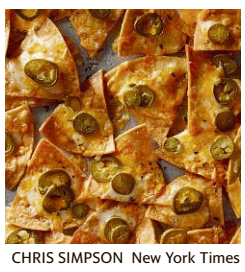
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Election ☆☆☆ 2020

We take seriously our part in telling the story of this historic election. While complete returns weren't available in time for inclusion in this print edition, subscribers will find additional analysis and results on our digital platforms:

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RACES TO WATCH
- **U.S. President:** Trump vs. Biden
- **Of local interest:** Charlotte-area congressional races

TOO CLOSE TO CALL

CAROLYN KASTER AP

With about 65% of votes reported Tuesday night, Democrat Joe Biden was ahead of Republican President Donald Trump 49.8% to 48.8% in North Carolina, according to the State Board of Elections. The numbers included results of a historic early vote that saw more than 4.5 million North Carolinians cast ballots before Election Day.

Biden, Trump in tight race in NC with most votes counted

DAVID T. FOSTER III dtfoster@charlotteobserver.com

Voters wait in line to cast their ballots at the Greater Galilee Baptist Church precinct Tuesday. The presidential race could come down to absentee votes.

BY JIM MORRILL AND TIM FUNK
jmorrill@charlotteobserver.com
tfunk@charlotteobserver.com

Democrat Joe Biden clung to a narrow lead over President Donald Trump in North Carolina on Tuesday night on the strength of absentee votes.

With about 65% of votes reported, Biden was ahead 49.8% to 48.8%, according to the State Board of Elections. The numbers included the results of a historic early vote that saw more than 4.5 million North Carolinians cast ballots before Election Day.

Though early votes traditionally favor Democrats in North Carolina, Trump took 50.2% of that vote and was winning the Election Day vote. Biden won absentees by about 360,000. In 2016 Democrat Hillary Clinton led after early votes were counted but Trump won 55% of the Election Day vote on his way to winning the state by 3.7 percentage points.

A New York Times/Siena College Poll last week showed that 76% of N.C. Democrats said they'd already voted compared with 58% of Republicans.

Biden was winning in urban areas and traditionally Democratic counties in the northeast. Trump was winning most rural counties.

A close race could come down to uncounted absentee votes. On Tues-

SEE PRESIDENT, 5A

Cunningham, Tillis go down to wire in Senate seat battle

BY BRIAN MURPHY
bmurphy@mcclatchydc.com

Republican incumbent U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis and Democratic challenger Cal Cunningham were running close in their pivotal U.S. Senate race in early results.

The most expensive Senate race ever is a key to determining which party controls the chamber come January, and the final month has largely been dominated by news coverage of Cunningham's marital infidelity and Tillis' sustained attacks on the challenger's character.

More than 4.5 million voters cast ballots before Election Day in the state. The first results were from those voters, which were expected to lean Democratic with Election Day votes

Cal Cunningham and Thom Tillis

expected to lean toward Republicans.

With the first 4.2 million votes counted, Cunningham, 47, had nearly 49% of the vote and Tillis was at nearly 47%.

Libertarian Party candidate Shannon Bray was at about 3% and Constitution Party candidate Kevin Hayes was at 1%.

Tillis, a former business executive and speaker of the

SEE SENATE, 6A

Democrat Cooper in lead vs. Forest for governor

BY DAWN BAUMGARTNER VAUGHAN, DREW JACKSON, ASHAD HAJELA AND KATE MURPHY
dvaughan@newsobserver.com
jdjackson@newsobserver.com
ahajela@newsobserver.com
kmurphy@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH

Will North Carolinians reelect Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper to a second term, or replace him with Republican Lt. Gov. Dan Forest?

With 62% of ballots reported, Cooper led with 53% of the vote compared to Forest's 45% of the vote. Cooper led with 2.4 million votes to Forest's 2 million votes.

Libertarian candidate Steven J. DiFiore had 1% of votes and Constitution Party candidate Al Pisano had less than one percent.

NC CAMPAIGN FOR GOVERNOR

The coronavirus pandemic changed this election year. The first case in North Carolina was recorded on the day of the March primary. Both Cooper and Forest easily won their

SEE GOVERNOR, 9A

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